



# NEWS RELEASE

United States Department of Agriculture • Rural Development  
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## USDA ANNOUNCES MORE THAN \$2.7 MILLION IN RURAL BUSINESS GRANTS

WASHINGTON, June 30, 2008 - Agriculture Secretary Ed Schafer today announced that 15 organizations in seven states have been selected to receive more than \$2.7 million in job creation and economic development grants.

“These funds underscore USDA’s commitment to foster a healthy business climate in rural areas,” Schafer said. “Helping small and emerging rural enterprises thrive is critical to our mission to deliver economic opportunity to rural communities.”

Among the projects receiving grants is the Butler County Resource and Development Group in Allison, Iowa. It plans to use a \$99,000 grant to create a revolving loan fund to help 22 Parkersburg community businesses obtain loans to rebuild their operations following a tornado that struck the community last month. The funding is expected to create 22 jobs. In Richland Center, Wis., the Richland County Economic Development Corporation has been selected to receive a \$395,000 Rural Development grant to recapitalize its revolving loan fund and help finance small businesses in the county affected by recent flooding. The Vandalia Heritage Foundation, located in Fairmont, W.Va., has been selected to receive a \$95,000 grant to help develop a kitchen incubator. A kitchen incubator is a large commercial kitchen in which many small food manufacturing companies share food preparation equipment and expenses. The project is expected to create six jobs in the town of Grafton, W.Va., where the incubator will be located.

The grants are funded through USDA Rural Development’s Rural Business Enterprise Grant (RBEG) program. RBEG funds are not solely utilized for disaster areas; however, competitive priority consideration has been provided to assist the below-listed recipients who are located in a presidentially declared disaster area. Funding of individual recipients is contingent upon their meeting all the requirements of the grant agreement.

### Rural Business Enterprise Grants

Recipient	State	Grant Amount
Molokai Community Rural Health Association, Inc.	HI	\$437,800
Iowa Valley RC&D	IA	\$95,000
Butler County Resource and Development Group	IA	\$99,000
Blue Ridge Riders Snowmobile Club	ME	\$78,900
Town of Van Buren	ME	\$350,000
Maine Alternative Agriculture Association	ME	\$199,000
Columbia-Pacific Economic Development District	OR	\$499,000

Committed to the future of rural communities.

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Enterprise for Equity	WA	\$93,000
Institute for Washington's Future	WA	\$28,650
Sno/Sky Agricultural Alliance	WA	\$96,806
Vandalia Heritage Foundation	WV	\$95,000
Wisconsin Women's Business Initiative	WI	\$97,000
Richland County Economic Development Corporation	WI	\$395,000
Fond du Lac County Economic Development Corporation	WI	\$99,900
CAP Services, Inc.	WI	\$100,000

USDA Rural Development's mission is to increase economic opportunity and improve the quality of life for rural residents. Rural Development has invested more than \$90 billion since 2001 for equity and technical assistance to finance and foster growth in homeownership, business development, and critical community and technology infrastructure. More than 1.7 million jobs have been created or saved through these investments. Further information on rural programs is available at a local USDA Rural Development office or by visiting USDA's web site at <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov>.

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